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STABILITY

—Elizabeth Sims

Genesis: Revised

A little boy with his bucket and spade
Wandered alone along the shore.
The water was warm enough to wade,
And the sand was soft enough for
The hand of the little child who with glee
And vivid thoughts—they too shall stray—
Decided to make of sand beside the sea
A castle, to pass the time of day.
So the child's imagination grew
Along with the castle's towers.
A moat, a steeple, a diversion so new,
The castle was finished. The hours
Had passed. The child grew tired of his toy.
So with an abandoning smile,
He left his castle, this little boy,
To chase some gulls for a while.
His castle he left unto the sea,
The wind and the sands to destroy;
Now somewhere else making castles is he,
And forgotten is his first little toy.

—*Linda McRae*

Three in One

I am my life.

The sum total

Of its events.

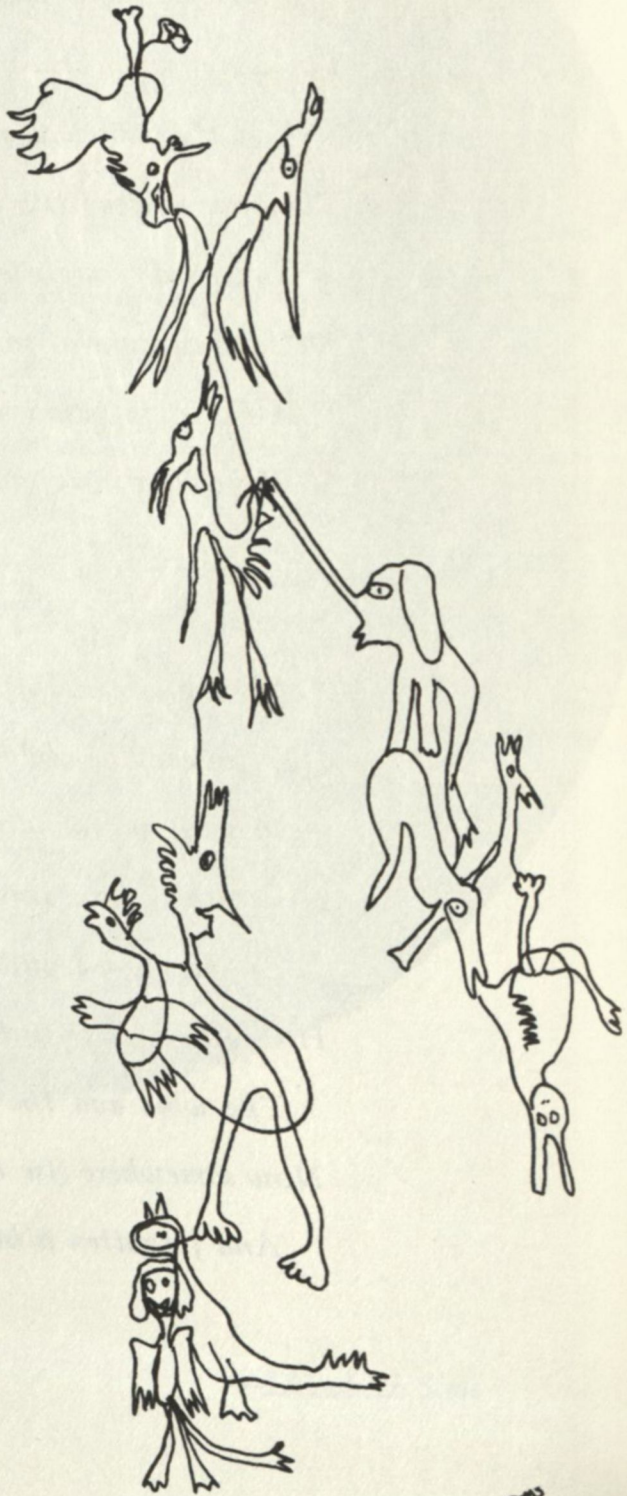
In me, all the threads

The odds and ends tied up,

And, coming out again

Define my future.

—*Suzanne Spence*



FRIENDS

—*Elizabeth Sims*

How like a sea shell
  Life can be,
A holder of heaven
  Soon drowned at sea.

Alone
  And the white bleached emptiness
    of an evacuated sea shell;
  Yet colorful
    and complex
  As the life it once contained.

—Darlene Hassler

It's quiet now—It's almost late
enough to be early—and all is quiet.
Listen. Do you hear?
A bird is singing.
He's not mocking the night nor is
he giving of his legendary knowledge to the dark. No.
He is a day-bird.
Isn't it strange?
He hears his echo across the lake.
Yes, it is quite strange—he thinks his
echo is another bird—but the other birds
are probably trying to sleep.
I knew that people were birds.
Now I know that birds are people.

—linda carter

Despair

I wish the world would turn dark;
That some gentle god
Would snuff out all of the world's
    ugly, scorching candles.
My every minute holds desperate hope
That some strong hand
Would smash the lever that turns this planet
On its
        screeching, grating axis.

Hear god my plea for
        almost-eternal silence.
Answer god my prayer for
        almost-everlasting nothingness.

My soul's desire leaves room for
Some Day
When the silence is broken by
    the voice of the turtle
    the spring tide
    the *Finlandia*
Then, of course, the world would
        grind again.
Then, of course, the flames would
        scorch again.
Then, of course,
        I would be gone.

—*Mary Russell*

The Four Seasons

A bitter wind blows
The silent whispering veils
Of the Winter snows.

Butterflies awake
Slowly, softly from slumber
In the Spring day-break.

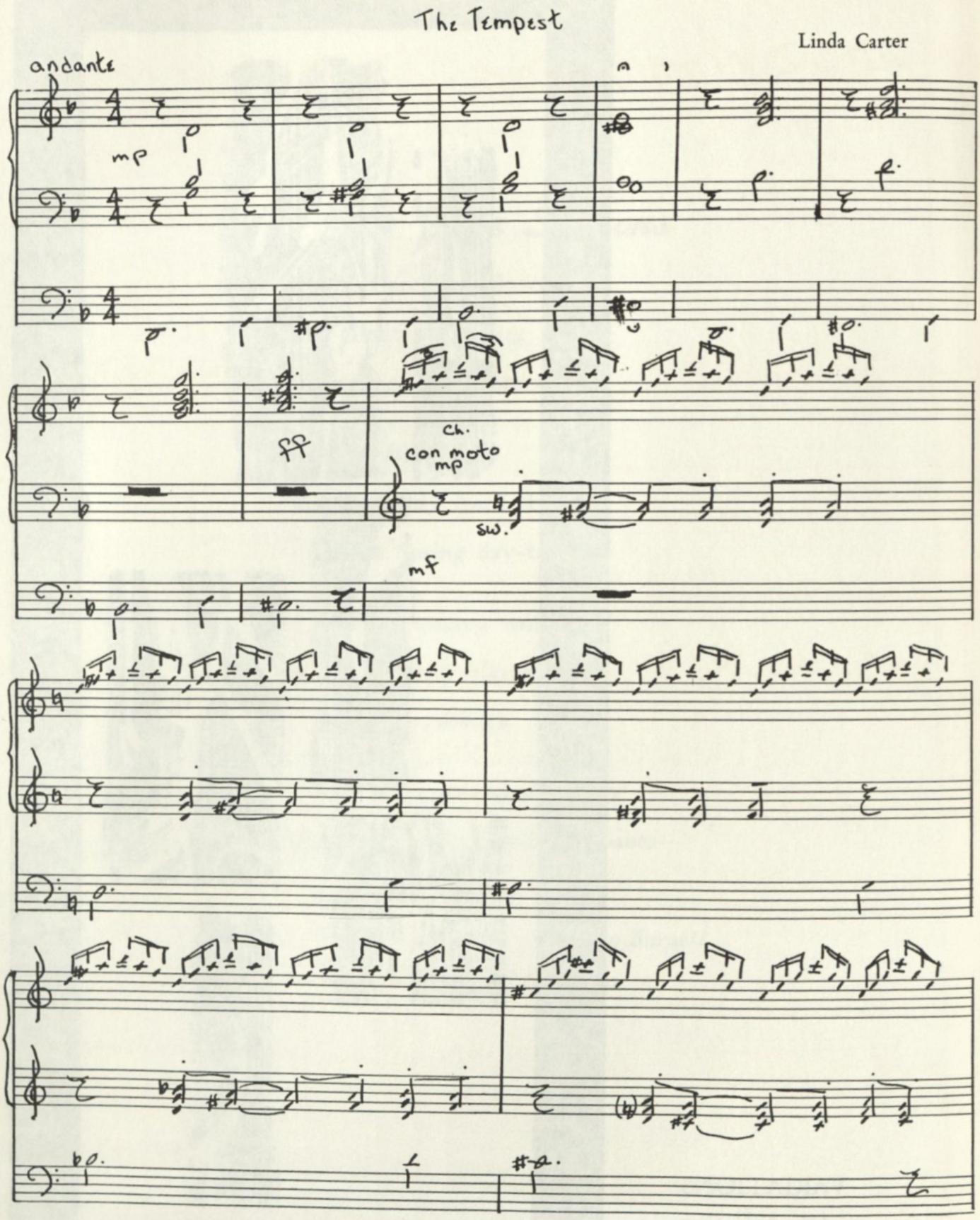
A child weaves, smileless
In the Summer afternoon,
A clover necklace.

Autumn rain makes smears
Upon my moonlit window panes—
Or, could they be tears?

—*Lynn Burnett*

VARIATIONS

—Elizabeth Sims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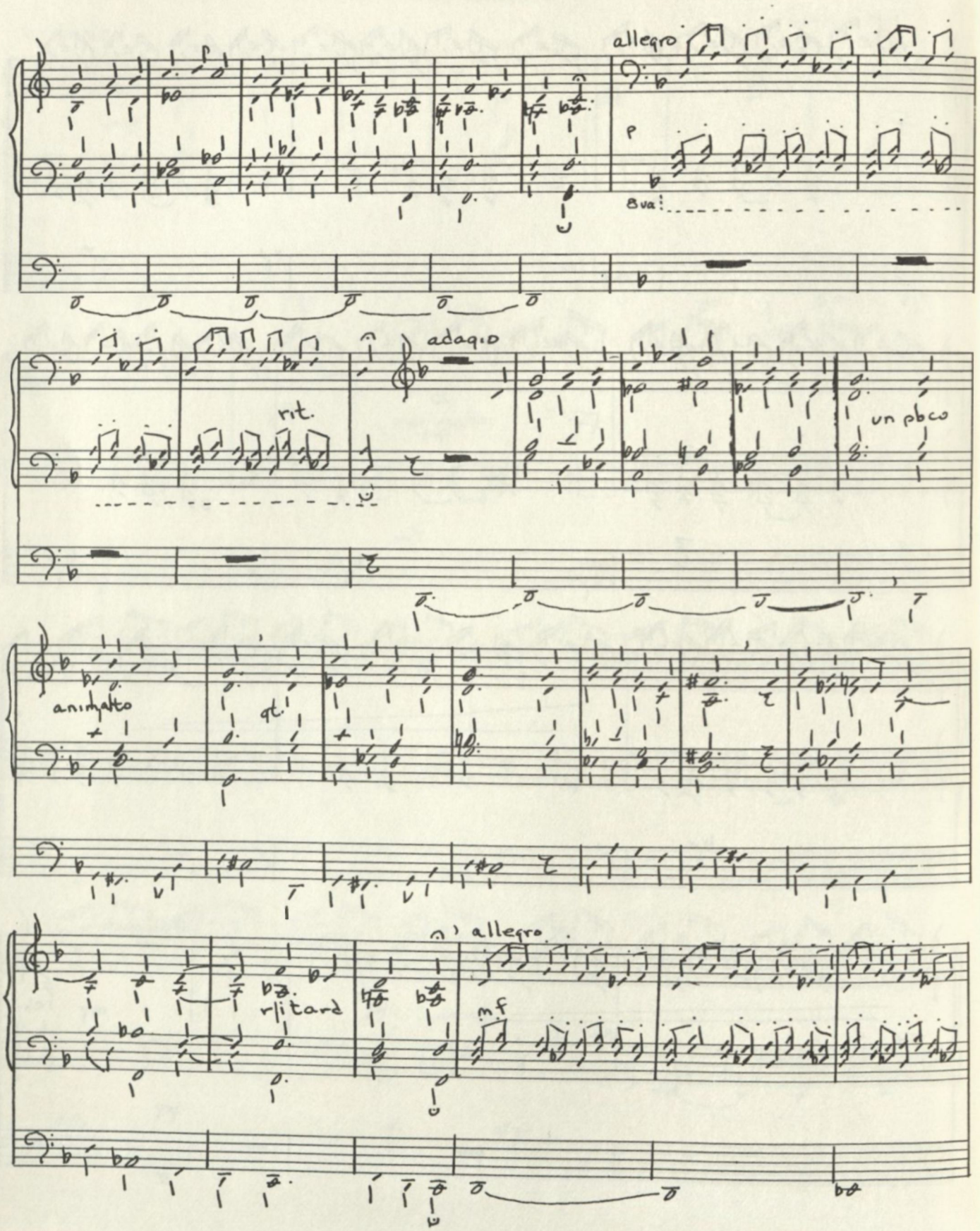
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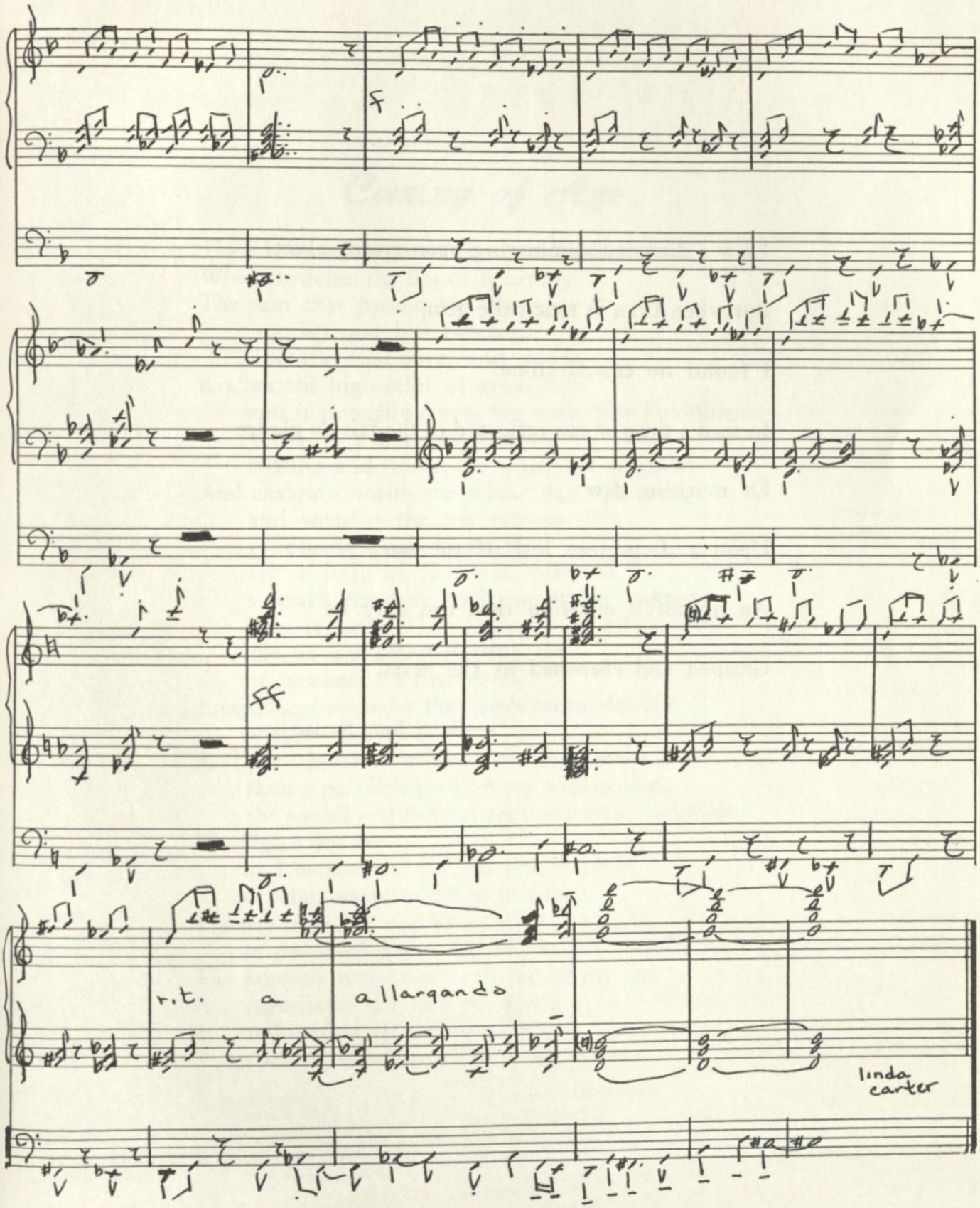
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I saw a diamond shimmering upon green velvet.

But when I ran to touch the gem,

I found no crystal stone.

Instead a drop of sun reflected in the fairy's glance

Of morning dew

Upon a deep-green leaf of summer;

An immortal diamond that can only be

Grasped and cherished in the heart.

—*Betti Jane Snow*

Coming of Age

There is something burnt and golden in the sun
Which touches the lips of Morning.
The pain that parches the dew away
    is crisp and bitter-sweet,
    like the first love, and youth.
Art has the high relish of noon-tide,
    and it hungrily craves for some New Fulfillment;
    yet is is a horrible hunger,
    stifling and still in the white-hot solitude;
And emotion wields the whole day's progress,
    and smashes the one rational iota
    (occuring around teatime)
    for a folly of fantastic imageries,
    a soul's romance with something unknown
    that it calls, "The Mystery of Life"—ah!
    the at-last-achieved pinnacle
    of aesthetic Whatever—
Agonizing insecurity that leads on to identify
    with artists' tools!
And yet Beauty must be something more
    than a psychologist's empty explanation,
    the sound and fury of an unnecessary neurosis.
The light burns,
    and bruises the desolate uncertainties
    of the disappointed afternoon.
The day does not stop being with the night,
    in the brief span of impatient childhood.
The labored melancholy of the dying sun
    repudiates the lust of dawn,
    and makes us realists again,
    (or frightened cowards in the night).

—joy cochran

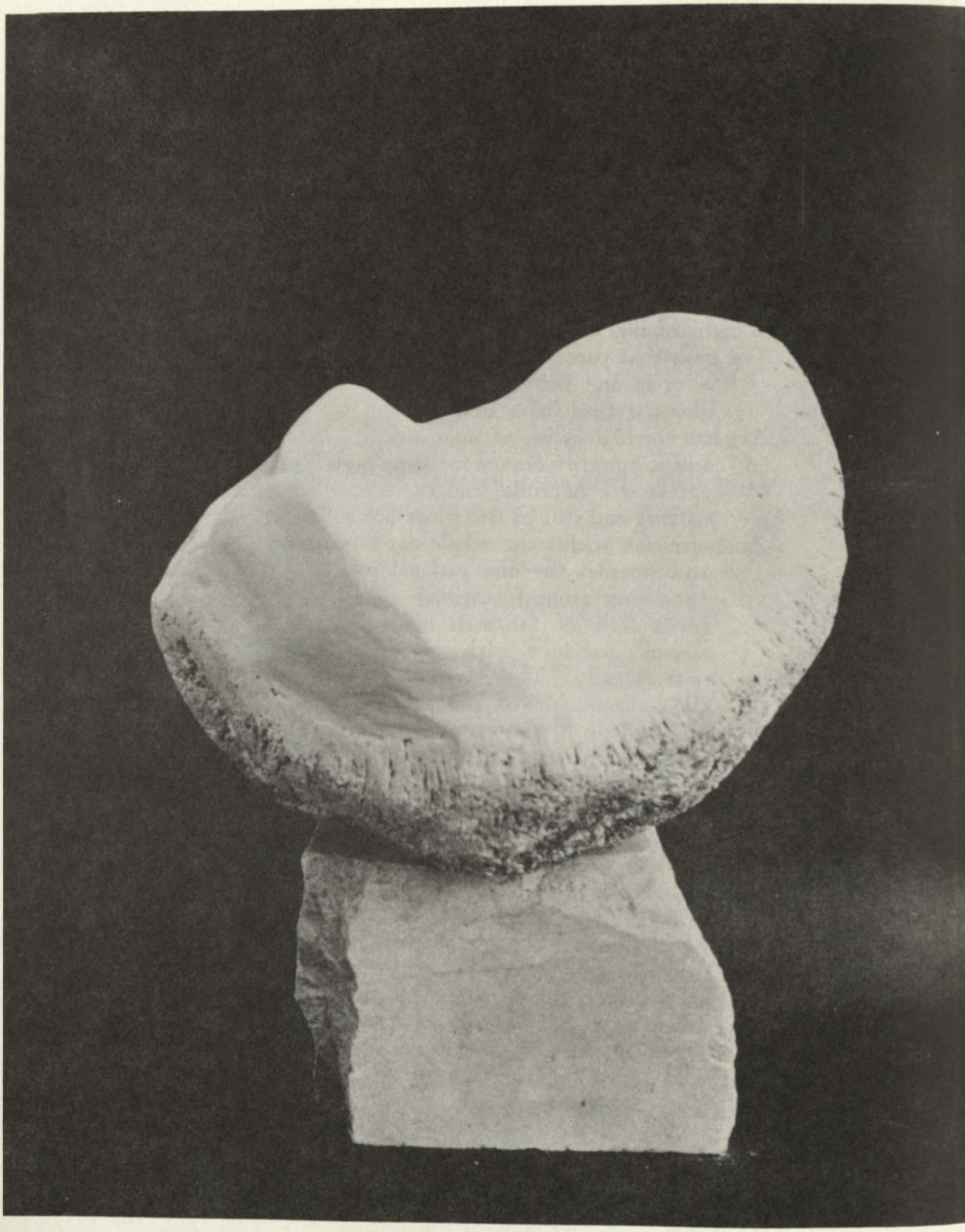


PHOTO OF SCULPTURE —*Elizabeth Sims*

They're All the Same

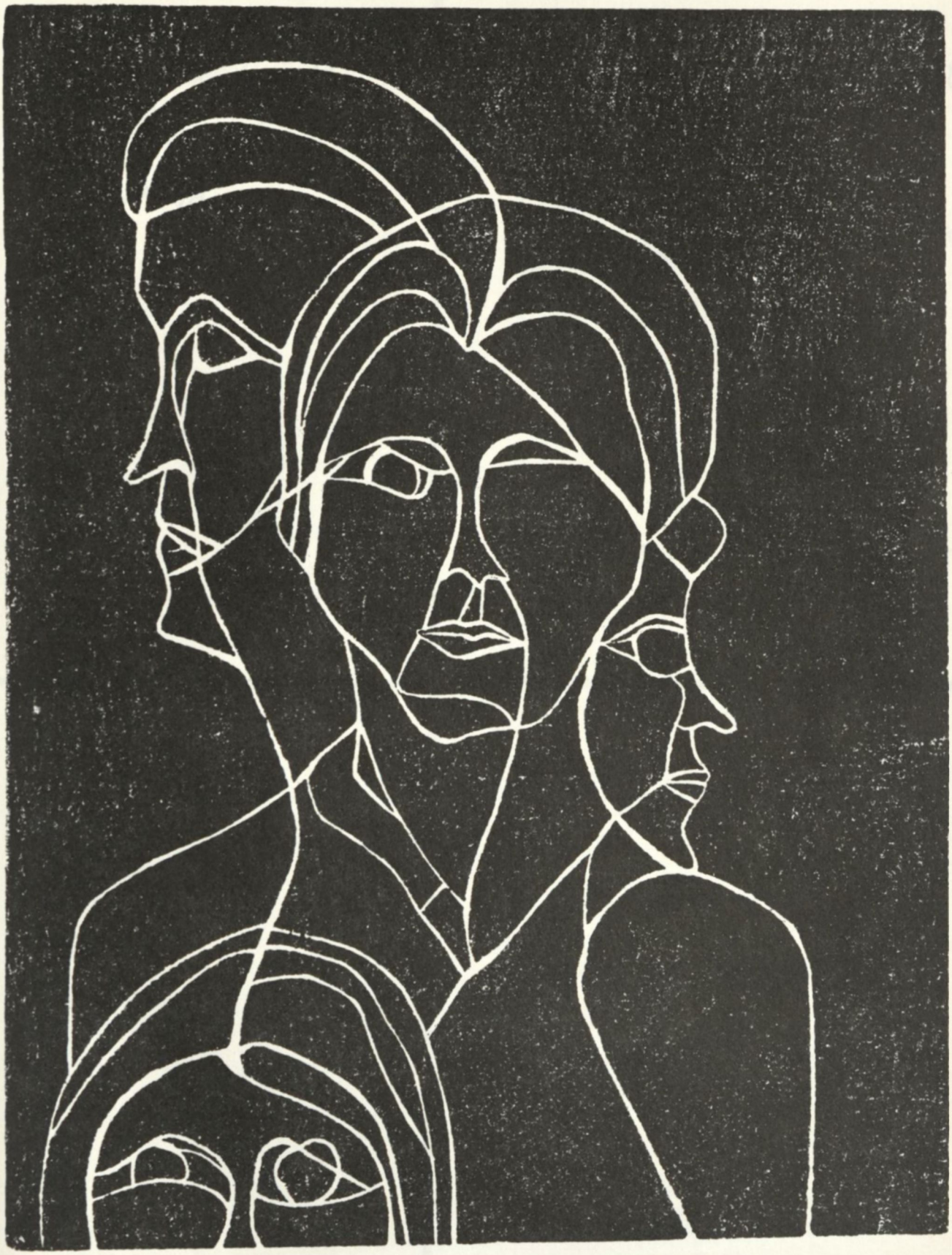
I dreamed I beat the world with a stick
I found, in a playground
where I had lain down
to escape the mass
That horrible Mass of faceless people
called civilization
By God they're all beginning to look the same
since emancipation
And kids never use playgrounds anymore.
They all wanted to be equal
So precious traditions were shot to hell.
Now read the sequel and
you'll see there they're equal,
So goddamn equal they all look the same—
They're GRAY!
We didn't want them on our playgrounds
so we left,
they came,
had a twirl in our world
and left.
Now nobody uses the playgrounds—
not a sound
except drifting down
And even the leaves are different colors,
some red, yellow, and brown
but mingled together on the ground
They all look the same,
They all rot the same
And stink the same.
So I picked up my stick
(this was a strong stick not like the scrawny others)
And I beat the world
But my sick broke—
They're all the same

—Bebe Ferrell

Any Questions, Class?

Can you tell me, sir
Was Alexander more
Than a cutter of knots?
Or if Napoleon ate food?
Like the rest of us.
Did Cleopatra have to diet,
Or Pompadour tease her hair?
Is history the account
Of men and women, sir?
Or just graven images.
If they are people
Then we had better learn from them.
If only idols, built by man,
Destroy them, for they weigh us down.

—*Suzanne Spence*



PERPLEXITY

—Elizabeth Sims

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